

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

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INFO AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA POUCH

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SUBJECT: EGYPTIAN-MARXIST JOURNALIST WRITES ON EGYPTIAN-USSR
RELATIONS

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED AHAM JANUARY 14 CARRIED LENGTHY
EDITORIAL BY LEADING EGYPTIAN MARXIST JOURNALIST LUTFI AL-KHOLY
ENTITLED "EGYPTIAN QUESTIONS AND SOVIET ANSWERS," WHICH DEVOTED TO
EGYPTIAN-SOVIET RELATIONS. AL-KHOLY, WHO RECENTLY RETURNED
FROM A VISIT TO MOSCOW (HIS FOURTEENTH IN EIGHTEEN YEARS),
REFERRED TO THE "KEEN INTEREST" IN EGYPTIAN-SOVIET RELATIONS
WHICH HE ENCOUNTERED AMONG SOVIET CITIZENS IN ALL WALKS OF
LIFE. AL-KHOLY SAID HE FOUND IDENTITY OF VIEWPOINT THAT
EGYPTIAN-SOVIET FRIENDSHIP REPRESENTED "UNIQUE EXAMPLE" IN
THE HISTORY OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS BETWEEN BIG COUNTRY,
LEADER OF SOCIALIST WORLD, AND SMALL STATE, LEADER OF ARAB
WORLD AND DECISIVE FORCE FOR NATIONAL LIBERATION IN THIRD
WORLD; AND THAT THIS COOPERATION PRODUCED BENEFICIAL RESULTS
FOR BOTH SIDES AS WELL AS FOR OVERALL LIBERATION MOVEMENT
AND FOR PEACE AND PROGRESS IN WORLD.

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2. AL-KHOLY, IN HIS DISCUSSIONS, SAYS HE ATTRIBUTED

DAMAGE DONE TO THIS FRIENDSHIP TO WEAKENING OF CONFIDENCE BETWEEN TWO PARTIES, PARTICULARLY AFTER NASSER'S DEATH, SADAT'S LIQUIDATING OF THE ALI SABRI CLIQUE, AND SADAT'S LIBERAL ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, AND POLITICAL MEASURES WHICH USSR VIEWED AS RETREAT FROM SOCIALISM. ANSWER HE RECEIVED WAS THAT EGYPT'S CHOICE OF POLITICAL AND SOCIAL SYSTEM IS ITS OWN BUSINESS IN WHICH NEITHER USSR NOR ANY OTHER PARTY HAS RIGHT TO INTERFERE. WHILE USSR PRAISED NASSER'S "PROGRESSIVE SOCIO-ECONOMIC MEASURES", USSR ALWAYS REGARDED HIS REGIME AS NOT TRULY SOCIALIST, BUT ONLY AS ONE FOLLOWING A NON-CAPITALIST FORM OF DEVELOPMENT, AND THAT SOVIET GOVERNMENT ONLY WISHES EGYPT WELL UNDER SADAT'S NEW POLICIES WHICH, ALTHOUGH LESS PROGRESSIVE, ALSO REPRESENT A NON-CAPITALIST FORM OF DEVELOPMENT.

3. ANOTHER POINT AL-KHOLY RAISED WAS WHETHER FAVORABLE TURN IN EGYPTIAN-US RELATIONS POSED THREAT TO EGYPTIAN-SOVIET FRIENDSHIP AND WHY. TO THIS HIS SOVIET INTERLOCUTOR RESPONDED THAT USSR VIEWS IMPROVEMENT OF EGYPTIAN-US RELATIONS AS FAVORABLE DEVELOPMENT FOR POLICY OF PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE AMONG ALL COUNTRIES, BUT OBJECTS SOLELY TO USSR BEING PUT ON THE SAME PLANE AS US' IN ITS RELATIONS WITH EGYPT, SINCE USSR, IS, AFTER ALL, A SOCIALIST COUNTRY, THAT DOES NOT AIM AT EXPLOITATION. END UNCLASSIFIED

4. BEGIN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE. COMMENT: ABOVE ATTEMPT TO EXPLAIN FROSTINESS IN SOVIET-EGYPTIAN RELATIONS LARGELY IN IDEOLOGICAL TERMS, AVOIDING HARSH BUT VERY REAL POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC DIFFERENCES WHICH DIVIDE THE ERSTWHILE ALLIES, IS TYPICAL OF AL-KHOLY'S MARXIST "TRUE BELIEVER" APPROACH TO THE ISSUE: AN APOLOGY THAT ATTEMPTS TO EXONERATE BOTH SIDES OF ANY ILL WILL. FACT THAT GOE NOW PERMITTING LONG TIME "MARXISTS" SUCH AS AL-KHOLY, TO TRAVEL TO USSR AND TO PUBLISH THEIR VIEWS IS INDICATION THAT GOE WISHES TO MAINTAIN SOME PUBLIC DIALOGUE WITH SOVIETS. THIS IS IN KEEPING WITH RECENT MODERATION OF GOE'S PUBLIC STATEMENTS ON RELATIONS WITH USSR. END LIMITED OFFICIAL USE.
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